



# The Maine Farmer: An Agricultural and Family Newspaper.

## Maine Farmer.

Augusta, Aug. 3, 1878.

TERMS OF THE MAINE FARMER.

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### Collectors' Notices.

Mr. J. F. Clark, our agent, will call upon our subscribers, in Rockland county during August and September.

### A Midsummer Reflection.

In our latitude, in consequence of the extremely warm weather often experienced in September, midsummer really comes in with the beginning of August, although according to the calendar August is the last of the summer months. During this month the mercury frequently registers as high as at any time for the summer, notwithstanding the nights are generally more comfortable than in July. The summer is not seen to attain its climax in August. There is a stifled and "sticky" condition of the atmosphere that is oppressive, and almost always we have a period of great drought during this month. The fields and pastures present a brown and dried appearance, and the winds of the month contain little moisture. The leaves of many kinds of trees begin to turn yellow, the early grain fields are white for the harvest, and there are unmistakable evidences of the near ripening of all the crops, and the speedy approach of the cooler days and longer evenings of early autumn.

In this climate how brief the period of our summer! and how soon, and short the season in which the important labors of the farmer are to be performed! We sow the seeds, put out the tender flowerings plants in the front border, water them a few times, pull a few weeds, cut a few bouquets; and then comes the harvest, the plants must be removed in doors, or an early frost kills the tender things of beauty. What is done has surely to be done quickly, and it oftentimes seems a singular provision that the period of hardest manual labor to secure the crops of the year—the crops upon which depend not only the farmer's flock and herds during winter, but the farmer's family as well—comes at the period of greatest heat and oppression, or the period when labor out of doors one must experience the greatest personal discomfort, and even the highest personal risk—that of life itself. During these midsummer days farmers are called to labor harder than at any other time for the year, they perform their labor out of doors, under a terribly hot sun, and in a heated, sweating atmosphere—and yet they do it, and cases of death from sun-stroke are not more frequent among them among men in cities or among those classes who work partially in the shade.

Now it must be admitted by even the most superficial thinker that there is some physical cause for this; some obscure and perhaps not yet well understood reason why men are enabled to labor harder in a greater waste of the vital tissues, and under the exhausting conditions of a midsummer sun, without experiencing as often doing an undue loss of vitality, or the capacity for long continued and trying bodily exertion.

When this cause is it is not easy to determine. "The sleep of the laboring man is sweet," and sleep is a wonderful restorer of the wastes of the body caused by excessive work. But may it not be that to that chemical quality of the atmosphere and particular office of which studies are only quite recent and results somewhat contradictory—is to be attributed much of that influence or power which enables men to perform a great amount of hard labor under the excessive head of an August sun? We know that sunshine bears most important relations to health—so much has long been acknowledged, but why it is beneficial is not so easy to explain. May it not be ascertained that the reason why men are enabled to perform so hard work in terribly hot weather is due to the fact of the generation of a vast amount of ozone, which has so great an influence for good upon animal life? Ozone, as chemists inform us, is found everywhere in air that rests upon the earth's surface, where the sun's rays have direct play—but seldom in densely populated cities; and during hot weather there is more ozone in the atmosphere by day than by night, although for the greater part of the year this condition is reversed.

The transportation of specie from one point to another, under the near approach to specie resumption, becomes an important question for the consideration of the Treasury Department. Heretofore the express companies have been relied upon for this purpose, but their charges, while perhaps not extraneous, have necessarily aggregated large sums. Two or three years ago Congress directed the transportation of milled currency and the distribution of internal revenue stamps by the registered letter system, and the experiment proved entirely satisfactory in the matter of security, promptness, and economy. The law regarding the transportation of three-class mail matter limits the weight of each package to four pounds, upon which the rate of postage is fixed at one cent per ounce. A package of four pounds of gold coin or bullion would amount in value to about \$1,000, upon which the postage would be 64 cents, while by express the charge for the same service would reach \$5 or \$10. It is not improbable that there will be some arrangement by which not only the Government, but private individuals may have a profitable and safe method of transporting coin and bullion.

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